

[ARCHERS]

- 75 Cuts, wounds, and sores are treated by rubbing the medicine, prepared with water or oil, into the wound. To cure headaches, rheumatism, and mental and other disorders, the skin may be scarified with an arrow and an herb rubbed into the wound. An effective though painful remedy against frambesia is widespread among the Mbuti. Mbuti and villagers both claim that it not only cures but prevents any recurrence of the affliction: Two species of vine are used, or, if the frambesia is malignant, a decoction is made with water and the earth of the nest of the ant (*ti'i*).

The Mbuti claim to know how to reduce fractures, says Schebesta.

Dysentery, diarrhea, and constipation are treated by enemas prepared from various lianas, barks, and peppers.

Various leaves and plants are applied or rubbed externally, without any scarification, against headache and stomach-ache, or inserted into tooth cavities.

- 759 Schebesta says that he has encountered no evidence of specialization in the field of medicine. There never seems to be any need for one
- 75 band to apply for help or advice from another,
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nor do the archers seem to rely on the villagers
for any medical help.

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RATIONALIZATION

Speculation on problems of life and death are dealt with under Religious Life (p. 188). Here we can say only that Schebesta does not give a special account of legends or legend telling. However, from the legends that he quotes, and from those given by Joset (1948), it appears that among the archers this is an important means not only of reinforcing a system of values, or of commenting on individual behavior in the band, but also of rationalizing the strange and unknown.

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Joset divides his collection of legends into four categories: (1) the Pygmy and his life; (2) animals: happy and unhappy relations between animals and Pygmies; (3) legends concerning the stars and sky; and (4) legends revealing individual psychological traits. Schebesta (1936b) says that legends tend to be spontaneous creations of individuals; there is no formal body of standard folklore.

THE LESSER MOLIMO (*molimo madé*)

224 Apart from death there are two major crisis areas over which the Mbuti may have little or no effective control, poor hunting and sickness. But they do have a certain amount of control, and it is frequently effective. Poor hunting is more often than not remedied simply by hunting elsewhere, and it is rare that a band goes hungry for any reason except laziness. Against sickness the Mbuti have many remedies that are plainly effective. In particular they know how to clean open wounds and prevent infection, they know how to set and mend broken limbs, they know how to reduce fevers, and they know how to alleviate minor ailments such as headache, toothache and mild stomach disorders. They also have effective remedies against snake-bite. So in case of sickness they either cure the patient, or else the patient becomes well of his own accord, or else he dies, the latter event leading to the greater *molimo*.

778 In such crises, then, time alone usually provides a solution, and the
[224] Mbuti are accustomed to waiting for these situations to improve. If
[75] bad hunting persists, however, or sickness shows no sign of alleviation, then it becomes a matter "of the forest." There is no rite or ceremony, but in the evenings the men gather around a central fire and sing *molimo* songs, thereby attracting the attention of the forest to their plight. The songs do not convey any specific request from the Mbuti for the betterment of their condition, it being considered necessary only to awaken the forest, for then it is for the forest to act as it will. Being benevolent, like a parent, whatever it does is accepted as being good, though it may not be understood.

776 Normally a lesser *molimo* lasts for only a few days, for during that time there is likely to be a change in the situation that is taken as an indication that the forest has awakened. The evening songs are not accompanied by any of the preliminaries that mark the greater *molimo*, nor are the women and children quite so rigorously excluded, and there is not the same order of dancing, which in the greater *molimo* is of the utmost importance. In the lesser *molimo* the dancing will be done by youths only, and be casual and mildly erotic. Above all there will be no use made of the *molimo* trumpet.

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[765] All adults youths and men are expected to take part, and although
[626] there will be criticism if someone does not attend, there will not be the same violent reaction that there is against such offenders in the greater *molimo*.